

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 MCE-00 ABF-01 OMB-01
TRSE-00 AID-05 ACDA-12 EB-08 INR-10 L-03 /069 W
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R 231531Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2857
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 3471

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, IR, NL
SUBJECT: DUTCH FRIGATES FOR IRAN

REF: A) THE HAGUE 2013 (111352Z APR 78 (NOTAL)), B) THE HAGUE
2064 (130904Z APR 78 (NOTAL))

1. RADM J.L. LANGENBERG, RNLN, DIRECTOR OF NAVAL MATERIEL,
IN CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE, TOLD US THAT HE HAD ARRANGED
FOR DUTCH NAVAL ATTACHE TO PROVIDE THE U.S. NAVY IN WASHINGTON
WITH DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE PLANS AND CAPABILITIES OF
NETHERLANDS SHIPBUILDERS AND THE RNLN TO CONSTRUCT FRIGATES
FOR IRANIAN NAVY, EMPHASIZING COMPATIBILITY OF US AND DUTCH
EQUIPMENT. HE FELT THAT THERE HAD BEEN GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG
USN PERSONNEL THAT DUTCH PLAN WAS VIABLE AND COULD BE COMPLETED
WITHIN THE SPECIFIED TIME FRAME. IN ADDITION HE HAD HEARD
THAT A USN TEAM WAS VISITING TEHRAN THIS WEEK TO DETERMINE
THE IRANIAN POSITION ON THE SHIPBUILDING PROGRAM.

2. THERE ARE CURRENT AND PERSISTENT RUMORS AROUND TOWN THAT
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THE REASON FOR DELAY IN U.S. RESPONSE TO EARLIER DUTCH
REQUESTS IS INTEREST OF AMERICAN SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY IN
OBTAINING IRANIAN BUSINESS FOR ITSELF. WHEN MFA POLITICAL
DIRECTOR RUTTEN LEARNED THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE VEST
WOULD BE IN HAGUE TODAY FOR PRIVATE VISIT HE ASKED EMBASSY TO
ARRANGE OPPORTUNITY FOR HIM TO SPEAK TO VEST ON TELEPHONE.
IT TURNED OUT THAT PURPOSE OF CONVERSATION WAS TO PASS ON RUMOR

OF U.S. INTEREST IN BUILDING IRANIAN FRIGATES AND TO URGE THAT
U.S. ACT FAVORABLY ON DUTCH REQUEST.

3. THE HAGUE 2013 AND 2064 OUTLINED THE IMPORTANCE GON
ATTACHES TO IRANIAN SHIPBUILDING ORDERS FOR THE DEPRESSED
SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY IN THE NETHERLANDS.

4. WE BELIEVE DUTCH DECISION ON P3 ORION MAY BE INFLUENCED
BY OUTCOME OF IRANIAN MATTER.

5. THE LONGER WE DELAY RESPONDING TO DUTCH REQUEST FOR THE
RELEASE OF THE REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND SUBSEQUENT INSTALLATION
ABOARD THE SHIPS CONSTRUCTED HERE IN THE NETHERLANDS SO THAT
DUTCH NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN CAN PROCEED, THE MORE DUTCH
CONCERN WILL GROW. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS PROBLEM COULD ASSUME
SERIOUS PROPORTIONS FOR US-DUTCH RELATIONS IF US DECISION IS
UNFAVORABLE AND PARTICULARLY IF US SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY SHOULD
OBTAIN IRANIAN ORDER. THIS WOULD CREATE DECIDEDLY AWKWARD
SITUATION FOR NEW AMBASSADOR. WE THEREFORE REQUEST THAT WE
BE PROVIDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH A RESPONSE FOR THE DUTCH.
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